Clay Geerdes **COMIX WAVE 148**
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THE LOWER DEPTHS AND SINKING

What's okay for the kiddies these days. Well, I decided to take a look at an issue of Clive Barker's **PINHEAD**. This is put out as an Epic comic, but Epic is just a division of Marvel, so it's a Marvel comic. I picked up the 5th issue. There is no adults only disclaimer on the cover, no notice that the comic is for mature readers, nothing to warn the unwary parent that the product may not be suitable for a kid reader. Now, I don't know if kids even read comic books anymore. I doubt that most can be torn away from the joy stick long enough to read anything, so perhaps all comics are now assumed to have an adult readership and I am the anachronism. Whatever. I go on. The splash for this issue of Pinhead shows a big blue humanoid kissing a prone naked redheaded woman. An erect sword dominates the center of the drawing in case you failed to get the message. In panel two the woman tells the blue creature to her let "feel the gods within" him, and by panel two she is up and putting on her top. A few panels later the woman is standing and telling the blue one that his "strength has sated" her as no one else's could. In other words, he was great in the sack. This scene would have meant so much to be at the age of eight. I would have understood all the subtleties.

The woman appears to be a normal human, yet she is having sex with a freak with six little swords stuck in his bald head. Kind of makes you wonder, huh? Now this woman who was praising the blue one's power on page three is saying she would like to see "an ending of strength..of power" on page six, which would be a contradiction anywhere but in this pseudo-fantasy world. On page eight, a giant pink creature punches a woman in the breast with his right hand and knocks her down. She is a servant to the redhaired woman. When she tries to help the girl, the pink creature says "move aside, whore." Tsk! Tsk! And you thought the kids learned that kind of talk from rap CDs. A page or two later and a child is drugged and throw into a flaming pit as a human sacrifice. A page or two pass and the pink creature smashes a blacksmith in the jaw with a stone hammer and burns him to death. A moment later the redhead attacks her blue seducer with a knife. A skeleton calls her a slut and falls on her pushing her into a fire where she burns to death. She's called a priestess, of course, but she's a woman, and as she burns in the flames the skeleton rips out her heart. The death of the priestess pisses the blue guy off and he chops off the left arm of the pink guy. In case your old eyes are getting a little weak, the character is turned toward you and blown up to half page size so you can revel in the bloody gore that exudes from the shoulder and arm socket. This is followed by a splash page with the blue pinhead smashing his right fist through the body of the pink demon. The episode ends with a pinhead holding a bloody bone as blood drips from his lips. the book is filled out with a few pin-ups tossed in for the gratification of the reader. One shows a pinhead carrying the corpse of a blonde woman--his lunch?

And people call the fantasies of Robert Crumb misogynistic! **PINHEAD** is just the latest in a long series of demonic manifestations that have appeared in straight comics since the revival of **CONAN** back in the early seventies. But Robert E. Howard was a pretty good story teller and when Roy Thomas translated his work into the early stories illustrated by Barry Windsor Smith the material retained its interest for me. **PINHEAD** is a dreadful imitation of an imitation with some of the worst writing I've ever suffered on the comic page. Who is editing this stuff? Where is Spelcheck?

I've always felt sword and sorcery was a copout. You see a beautiful woman and she is suddenly torn to pieces only to turn into some weird beast and the idea is that she was simply enchanted, under some witch's spell, her form changed like that of the frog prince or the beast in Beauty and the Beast. What is manifest, however, is an attitude toward women, an anger toward them, a revenge motive. This is logical. Most comic books are aimed at adolescent boys and in the clutch of puberty women are strong desired and as strongly feared. A boy wants, but fears rejection, so he gets angry and seeks revenge against those girls he fears would reject him if he had the nerve to approach them. This complex of emotions underlies nearly all comic book fantasy. The woman is drawn perfectly. After all, she is the artist's fantasy first of all and only shared with others as an afterthought. The male allowed to approach her has to be more perfect than she is, a superbeing, a superhero, the opposite of the ordinary number-crunching nine-to-five reader. The frustrated reader would like to kill that beautiful redhead and rip out her heart, but he settles for a comic book and accepts symbolic gratification. This was always implied or inferred in comic book stories, but in **PINHEAD** nothing is latent, nothing subtle, nothing left to the imagination. That slashed arm is a blatant as John Wayne Bobbitt's dick. All of the male expressions in **PINHEAD** are angry and mean, all of them! The only soft expressions come from the women and there are only a few of these. I found nothing at all in this comic book that I could identify with, no character that even remotely represented me. My honest feeling when I finished with the book was: why would anyone want to publish this rot? My second reaction was anger at the publisher's cynicism in assuming this was appropriate subject matter for all ages when the only child shown in the story is thrown into a pit of flames and burned to death as a human sacrifice.

I wondered how long the Indians would sit still for all that nonsense in Barrie's **PETER PAN**. A middle school in Southhampton, New York, cancelled it's production of **PETER PAN** because administrators decided the musical's portrayal of Indians was offensive to members of the Shinnecock tribe, whose reservation is on the town's border and whose children make up 9 % of the district's students. The kids are now rehearsing **THE WIZARD OF OZ**. Munchkins, take notice. A monarchial matriarchy ruled by Princess Ozma, Oz has it's own PC problems.

PENNY WISE BUT POUND FOOLISH

I was in a comic book store near El Cerrito the other day. I buy things there once in awhile. I'm a customer. There were some old comics in a box marked half off and I saw a couple of **MUTT AND JEFFS** so I decided to see what kind of person I was doing business with. I offered ten apiece for the books. Neither was in mint shape and both were slightly browning at the edges and I had seen these comics in that store for several years. At the same time I was already buying about $30 worth of stuff, so would this dealer say "sure, ten sounds good," and keep a customer or would he weasel me for a few dollars more on a single sale that would cost him a lot of future sales. That has always amazed me about dealers. Those who have given me a break once in awhile have gotten my business for years. I never do any more business with those who nickel and dime me. Well, this guy weaseled me on those **MUTT AND JEFFS**. He said they were already half off. Half off of what? I know he didn't buy those books. They probably came in a box with a lot of other stuff that the store got for five or ten bucks and he's trying to hold out for a couple thousand per cent profit. I've been in this game too long. I worked in a comic book store on Telegraph Avenue back in 1973 and I watched what went on. I saw people paid pennies for books that later sold for hundreds of dollars. Most of the older books in comic book stores came from the attics and basements of naive people who had no idea of their value. A comic book dealer came along and offered to clean out that attic or basement for them and they gave him "those old magazines and stuff." None of the people in the business today are old enough to have bought any golden age comics off the rack. Their money has been made at the expense of people who didn't know the business.

This dealer tossed me away. He could have sold me the **MUTTS** and kept me as a customer, but he tried to squeeze that extra buck or two on a single sale and pissed the future down the drain. There are lots of stores, pal, and I can deal with any of them.

RABBITBOY 6 is $1.52 pp from
Bruce Stengl
633 King St., #13
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

It was **Slow Death 4** [1973] in which Richard Corben did a parody of **MAGNUS ROBOT FIGHTER**.

Mrs. Bruce Deam had the license plate **A PUSSY** for 20 years, then the DMV tried to recall it. She protested, arguing that she didn't know it had any other meaning. Mrs. Deam is a cat lover.

The most frequent crime in Berkeley? Bicycle theft.

COMIX PLUGOLA

"Hey, wouldn't you rather have a make-believe character in high office saying what's real than a real politician saying what's make believe?"

--Steve Willis
CRANIUM FRENZY 7

You can't keep a good cartoonist away from the drawing board. So it is with Steve Willis. Get the latest **CRANIUM FRENZY** for $1 or trade from POB 390, McCleary, WA 98557-0390.

And guess who wrote the script for the latest **INDIANA JONES** comic book? Lee Marrs. Lee came to California from Alabama via Washington DC back at the tail end of the sixties. Her **PUDGE GIRL BLIMP** series was published by Last Gasp and rejected by Ms. You can get **INDIANA JONES AND THE ARMS OF GOLD** from your local dealer.

Why is it that Jack Nicholson suddenly gets on the cover of a lot of magazines now that he's older and more demonic looking? Where were they when he was a young stud playing the dentist in the original **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS?**

And why was Nancy Kerrigan interviewed at the academy awards? All those stars passing in review and the news people give time to someone who has yet to make a movie. What a joke!

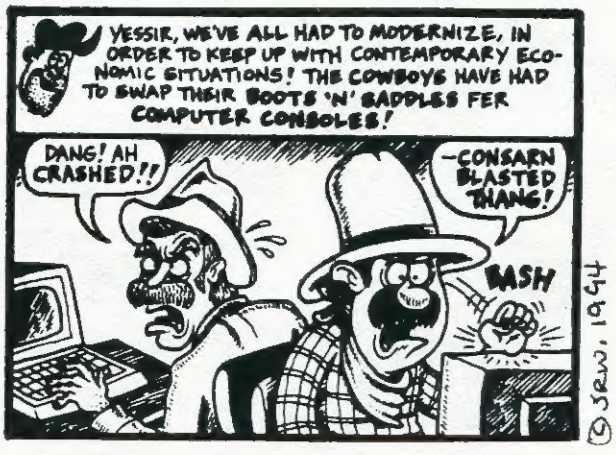
J. R. Williams **CRAP 3** has a couple of good stories in it. I've spread a few of the panels around this page for you to sample. Jim started out doing parodies of **MAD**. His **SKINBOY** stuff from the early eighties established his style.

I finally figured out what CD-ROM is all about. Computer games for adults who were addicted to them as children. I saw a clip on **REAL SEX** about **Virtual Valerie**, a woman you can do anything to and with. A click of the mouse and there goes Val's bra. Another click and there go her panties. Click again and she moves her hand to her crotch. Clickety-click-click-click! While you sit there reading this stuff, there are grown men [and boys] out there clicking away. Val is programmed with lots of the right answers to the hacker's questions. One can only speculate about the fate of real women in a culture saturated with these games. Er--not tonight, dear, I'm got to finish this program.

WE GOT CULTURAL DIVERSITY COMIN' OUT OUR EARS... FOLKS ARE MIGHTY TOLERANT OF ONE-ANOTHER'S ECCENTRICITIES, TOO-- IT'S DOWNRIGHT HEARTWARMIN'!
MERRY CHRISTMAS, BOHEMIAN, LEFTIST HOMOSEXUAL!
SAME TO YOU, CONSERVATIVE, RIGHT-WING RELIGIOUS ZEALOT!

ALL KINDS OF TECHNOLOGICAL INDUSTRIES KEEP POPPIN' UP JUST LIKE WEEDS! AN' ALL THE BUSINESS ATTRACTS FOLKS FROM ALL OVER--WHICH MAKES FOR A MIGHTY INTER-ESTIN' BLEND OF PEOPLE, I MUST SAY!
MACRO-HARD INC.
SOYLENT GREEN
WIDGETS 'R' US
SPACELY Space Sprockets

ALL THE GROWTH WE'VE BEEN EXPERIENCIN' AIN'T BEEN ENTIRELY BAD FOR US--BUT WITH ALL THE OUTSIDE INFLUENCES A-COMIN' IN, THINGS DO GIT A BIT STRANGE FROM TIME-TO-TIME...
SALOON -ESPRESSO- -LATTES-
BARBER -TATTOOS- -BODY PIERCINGS-
OPEN


YESSIR, WE'VE ALL HAD TO MODERNIZE, IN ORDER TO KEEP UP WITH CONTEMPORARY ECO-NOMIC SITUATIONS! THE COWBOYS HAVE HAD TO SWAP THEIR BOOTS 'N' SADDLES FER COMPUTER CONSOLES!
DANG! AH CRASHED!!
-CONSARN BLASTED THANG!
BASH
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